

Serial No.: 10/803,765
Docket No.: 26223-10

Art Unit: 2813
Examiner: Thanhha Pham

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-9 and 22-27 are pending.

Claims 2 and 10-21 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Support for the amendments to the claims can be found in the specification at paragraphs 22-24, 33, 38 and 42-47.

The Examiner had rejected claim 1 as being indefinite. It is believed that the amendment resolves this minor informality by clarifying that the "metal ions" are the non-precious metal ions.

The Examiner had objected to the specification as failing to support matter contained in original claims 5 and 6. The applicant has amended the specification accordingly as suggested by the Examiner.

The Examiner had rejected claim 1-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over the following references:

Feldstein (U.S. 4,328,266)
Nuzzi, et al (U.S. 4,199,627)
Segawa, et al (US 6,638,564)
Imura, et al (US 4,659,587)

In view of the following rejection, the applicant has amended claim 1 to clarify that sub-steps (a) and (b) occur sequentially as separate steps. The applicant's amendments further require that the silicon wafer substrate be plated with an electroless metal plating bath and that the silicon wafer substrate be heated to an elevated temperature prior to or during the electroless plating process. None of the cited references alone or in combination reveal or suggest the invention as currently claimed.

Serial No.: 10/803,765
Docket No.: 26223-10

Art Unit: 2813
Examiner: Thanhha Pham

Specifically, the ability to puddle process silicon wafers in this manner is substantially enhanced by heating the silicon wafer substrate itself prior to or during the electroless process. This concept of heating the silicon wafer itself is not revealed or suggested in the cited references either alone or in combination.

In addition, new dependent claims 22-25 have been added to address the following independently patentable distinctions:

- puddle formed on the wafer by providing a wall around the periphery of the wafer (Claim 23);
- heating is performed on a localized basis on the wafer (Claim 23);
- heating causes decomposition of the electroless plating solution (Claims 24 and 25).

CONCLUSION

It is believed that the Examiner's rejections have been overcome. It is believed that this application is in a condition for immediate allowance and such action is earnestly sought. If the Examiner perceives of any reason why this application should not be immediately granted, she is requested to contact the undersigned at (203) 575-5646 for a telephone interview prior to issuance of the next Office action.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 

John L. Cordani, 37,297
Carmody & Torrance LLP
50 Leavenworth Street
P.O. Box 1110
Waterbury, CT. 06721-1110
(203) 578-4271